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IMPROVING THE OPERATION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS TREATY BODIES

Report of the Secretary-General

Introduction

1. The General Assembly first decided to include on its agenda an item on the reporting obligations of States parties under United Nations human rights instruments in its resolution 37/44 of 3 December 1982. Since then, the General Assembly has considered and expressed its concern over problems relating to the reporting obligations under various human rights instruments, as well as their effective monitoring by the bodies created under those instruments, at each of its sessions and has adopted relevant resolutions reflecting such concerns (most recently, General Assembly resolutions 47/111 and 48/120).

2. The first meeting of the Chairpersons of the bodies entrusted with the consideration of reports submitted under the relevant human rights instruments took place at Geneva on 16 and 17 August 1984. The results of that meeting are contained in document A/39/484. The Second, Third and Fourth Meetings of the Chairpersons were held at Geneva from 10 to 14 October 1988, from 1 to 5 October 1990 and from 12 to 16 October 1992, respectively. The Fifth Meeting of Chairpersons has been convened by the Secretary-General pursuant to General Assembly resolution 47/111 of 16 December 1992 and Commission on Human Rights resolution 1993/15 of 26 February 1993.

3. The major international event in the human rights field since the Fourth Meeting of the Chairpersons was the World Conference on Human Rights, held at Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993. In section II, paragraph 3, of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (A/CONF.157/23), the World Conference recognized "that relevant specialized agencies and bodies and institutions of the United Nations system ... play a vital role in the formulation and implementation of human rights standards" and called upon such bodies to take into account the outcome of the Conference within their fields of competence. Accordingly, this report contains frequent references to the Conference's main actions or recommendations, as reflected in the above-mentioned document, as well as to the views or recommendations contained in the Vienna Statement of the International Human Rights Treaty Bodies (A/CONF.157/TBB/4) and in the interim report on the updated study by the independent expert on enhancing the long-term effectiveness of the United Nations human rights treaty regime (A/CONF.157/PC/Add.11/Rev.1), both of which were submitted to the World Conference.

I. FOLLOW-UP ACTION ON THE CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FOURTH MEETING OF CHAIRPERSONS

4. The report of the Fourth Meeting of Chairpersons (A/47/628) was considered by the General Assembly at its forty-sixth and forty-seventh sessions. Developments relating directly to the conclusions and recommendations contained therein are discussed below.

Role of the Security Council and development of effective responses in emergency situations (paras. 42-45)

5. Pursuant to the Chairpersons' suggestion that each treaty body "undertake an urgent examination of all possible measures that it might take within its competence, both to prevent human rights violations from occurring and to monitor more closely emergency situations of all kinds arising within the jurisdiction of States parties", a number of concrete steps have already been undertaken. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination adopted a working paper on the prevention of racial discrimination, which included the following early warning and urgent procedures:

(i) Early warning measures

Establishment of a follow-up mechanism to the adoption of concluding observations, particularly in cases where such action was deemed especially important;

Members could offer to visit States parties to facilitate the implementation of certain international standards, to help deal with specific problems or to assist in efforts to establish human rights institutional infrastructure;

The Committee's concluding observations could include specific recommendations to the effect that States parties consider availing themselves of assistance under the technical cooperation programme of the Centre for Human Rights;

Committee members could offer their expertise to the Centre for Human Rights in the implementation of the Centre's technical cooperation programmes;

The Committee could submit information to the Secretary-General as a contribution to the early warning mechanism to be established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 47/120, section II (1);

Greater cooperation could be developed with regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights as such cooperation would enhance the Committee's information base and facilitate follow-up to the Committee's recommendations;

The Committee could take a more active approach in encouraging international assistance for the promotion and protection of human rights.

(ii) Urgent procedures

The Committee could request the urgent submission of a special report containing measures taken to prevent the serious, massive or persistent racial discrimination (or human rights violations);

The Committee could designate a special rapporteur to act as a focal point for monitoring critical situations, to consult with the Chairperson on the initiation of the urgent action procedure and to follow up on decisions taken;

The Committee could address an expression of its concern, along with recommendations for action, to: the State party concerned; special rapporteur(s) of the Commission on Human Rights; the Secretary-General for the attention of the early warning mechanism to be established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 47/120, section II (1); all other human rights bodies dealing with the question concerned; the Secretary-General, along with a recommendation that the matter be brought to the attention of the Security Council.

6. Several other committees have also introduced or made use of urgent procedures. The Human Rights Committee has made requests for special reports, on an urgent basis, from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), Peru and Burundi. It also amended its rules of procedure to the effect that in between sessions the Chairperson, in consultation with members of the Committee, can request the submission of such reports. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights has developed a range of options for requesting additional information from a State party, including in serious situations where there is an urgent need for information. In such cases, if the additional information is not forthcoming, the Committee can request the State party concerned to accept a mission consisting of one or two of the Committee members, for the purpose of continuing the Committee's dialogue with the State party. To date no State party has complied with a request of the Committee to permit its members to visit that State party. The Committee on the Rights of the Child has drawn its concerns regarding the

plight of children in the territory of, for example, the former Yugoslavia to the attention of the Special Rapporteur appointed by the Commission on Human Rights to follow the situation of human rights in the territory of the former Yugoslavia.

7. The High Commissioner for Human Rights has expressed his intention to cooperate fully with the treaty bodies in discharging his mandate in the area of preventing violations and responding to emergency situations, and has requested their suggestions and assistance.

8. No formal action has yet been taken in respect of the proposal by the Secretary-General concerning the need to explore the possibility of "empowering" the treaty bodies - along with the Secretary-General - to bring massive violations of human rights to the attention of the Security Council, together with recommendations for action. However, as noted above, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, under the early warning and urgent procedures it has now adopted, does envisage recommending to the Secretary-General that its concerns be brought to the attention of the Security Council, as appropriate.

More effective integration of human rights into the totality of United Nations activities (para. 46)

9. The coordination of activities relating to the promotion and protection of human rights throughout the United Nations system is one of the functions of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, as set out in General Assembly resolution 48/141. The creation of the position in itself represents a major advance towards the integration of human rights concerns into the overall range of the Organization's activities. The Chairpersons may also wish to note in this connection that the Vienna Statement indicated that agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, as well as officials responsible for peace-keeping, election monitoring and other such activities, should receive human rights training.

Financing of the treaty bodies (paras. 47-48)

10. In its resolution 47/111, the General Assembly inter alia endorsed the amendments relating to financing that were adopted by the States parties to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and requested the Secretary-General to "take the appropriate measures to provide for the financing of the Committees established under those Conventions from the regular budget of the United Nations, beginning with the budget for the biennium 1994-1995" and "to ensure that the two Committees meet as scheduled until the amendments enter into force".

Secretariat servicing (paras. 49-50)

11. The World Conference recommended, inter alia, that sufficient human, funding and other resources should be provided to the Centre for Human Rights to enable it to carry out its activities effectively, efficiently and

expeditiously. It also stressed the importance of strengthening the Centre for Human Rights and assuring "adequate means for the system of thematic and country rapporteurs, experts, working groups and treaty bodies".

12. The view was put forward in the Vienna Statement that if the treaty supervisory system were to function efficiently and effectively the number of the relevant professional staff should be tripled.

Information sources (paras. 51-55)

13. In the light of the recommendations adopted by the Fourth Meeting of Chairpersons in respect of the establishment of an integrated information and documentation system, including computerization of the work of the treaty bodies, the establishment of country dossiers, and ensuring the adequate flow of information from non-governmental organizations, the following information is of relevance:

(i) Establishing an integrated information and documentation system, including computerization of the work of the treaty bodies

14. The creation of an integrated information and documentation system would greatly facilitate the control and retrieval of information, including directly relevant United Nations and specialized agency documentation, some of which is available in existing databases. For example, the International Labour Office and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees have information of direct relevance to the work of the treaty bodies "on line", but such information is not being systematically accessed by the Centre for Human Rights.

15. The Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 1994/19 requested the Secretary-General to give high priority to establishing a computerized database to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the functioning of treaty bodies and to give priority to expediting the implementation of the recommendations of the Task Force on Computerization as soon as possible.

16. The Centre for Human Rights has appointed a coordinator for office automation. The coordinator will be responsible for such matters as the purchasing of hardware and software, developing a local area network for the Centre, linking the Centre to existing electronic information systems and databases and developing further databases. The special database needs of the treaty bodies are being addressed as a matter of priority, including the development of databases relating to the status of international instruments, the status of reporting, and information concerning follow-up of suggestions and recommendations contained in observations emanating from the consideration of State party reports. The establishment of free, text-retrieval databases for State party reports, summary records of the consideration of such reports, and for concluding observations, is also being pursued.

(ii) Country dossiers

17. The secretariat has begun preparing country dossiers for individual committees. The development of a centralized system for country-related

information will be of great importance to the success of such efforts and to the eventual development of a single dossier that could be made available to all treaty bodies.

(iii) Role of non-governmental organizations

18. The Vienna Statement reiterated that non-governmental organizations have important roles to play in scrutinizing State party reports at the national level; providing information to treaty bodies; assisting in the dissemination of information; contributing to the implementation of recommendations by the treaty bodies. It suggested that an NGO liaison unit should be established by the Centre for Human Rights to facilitate outreach by the treaty bodies.

19. A number of significant developments have taken place recently in the area of cooperation between non-governmental organizations and certain treaty bodies in the information field:

(i) NGOs have organized themselves into an NGO Group on the Convention on the Rights of the Child and have appointed a coordinator to liaise not only with the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the secretariat but also with international and national NGOs working on children's rights. The NGO Group has prepared a guide for non-governmental organizations on how they may present complementary information to the Committee on the Rights of the Child. On the basis of the written information submitted by NGOs to the Committee, particular NGOs may be invited to present information orally to its pre-sessional working group.

(ii) To improve the coordination of non-governmental and other information presented to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, an organization called the Anti Racism Information Service (ARIS) has been established by the NGO community. The organization also disseminates official United Nations documents, reports, observations and press releases to human rights groups and individuals.

(iii) The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights adopted, in May 1993, a new procedure relating to the participation of non-governmental organizations in the Committee's activities. Non-governmental organizations have been encouraged to provide written information to the Committee and have been given the possibility to present oral information that is reliable, relevant and focused on the provisions of the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and/or country situations to the Committee both during its pre-sessional working group and at the beginning of each of its sessions. The Committee requested its Chairperson, in conjunction with the secretariat, to make these procedures as widely known as possible.

Public information (paras. 56-59)

20. A procedure has been instituted for sharing information through the preparation of a briefing note about the activities of the Committees after

each of their sessions. Some Committees have also begun to incorporate in their concluding observations the suggestion that States parties should prepare in a special package, and disseminate as widely as possible, the State party report and the summary records and concluding observations on the examination of the report.

21. In the Vienna Statement of the International Human Rights Treaty Bodies it is noted that the treaty bodies cannot fulfil their functions effectively if information about their activities is confined to Governments and that efforts should therefore be made to present their activities in ways that are accessible to the community at large. It is suggested, inter alia, that such information should be made available for discussion to community groups through national institutions, NGOs, schools, the press and other relevant media, and the importance of efforts to educate citizens and residents about human rights and democracy as essential elements of an effective overall human rights strategy is stressed. The World Conference, for its part, called on Governments, with the assistance of intergovernmental organizations, national institutions and non-governmental organizations, to promote an increased awareness of human rights and mutual tolerance.

Reservations (paras. 60-65)

22. In the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the World Conference on Human Rights recommended that States "consider limiting the extent of any reservations they lodge to international human rights instruments, formulate any reservations as precisely and narrowly as possible, ensure that none is incompatible with the object and purpose of the relevant treaty and regularly review any reservations with a view to withdrawing them". The Conference also expressed support for finding ways and means of addressing the particularly large number of reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and urged States to withdraw reservations that were contrary to the object and purpose of that Convention or which were otherwise incompatible with treaty law. It made the same recommendation in respect of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

23. In the foregoing connection, it may also be noted that in response to Sub-Commission resolution 1992/3, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that the Sub-Commission should support steps to seek an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice that would clarify the issue of reservations to the human rights treaties and thereby assist States parties in their ratification and implementation of those international instruments. Additionally, the Human Rights Committee has begun preparatory work on a general comment that would address issues relating to reservations made upon ratification or accession to the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights or its first Optional Protocol.

Succession in relation to human rights obligations (para. 66)

24. The Commission on Human Rights, in its resolution 1994/16 on succession of States in respect of international human rights treaties, reiterated its call to successor States which had not yet done so to confirm that they continued to be bound by obligations under international human rights treaties. In all, seven States have thus far done so. The Committee on the

Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Human Rights Committee have both taken steps to draw to the attention of successor States to the former Soviet Union the fact that the protections and obligations contained in the respective instruments continued to extend to the inhabitants of such States as from their respective dates of independence.

New instruments (paras. 67-69)

25. The World Conference encouraged the Commission on Human Rights, in cooperation with the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, to continue the examination of optional protocols to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. It reaffirmed that efforts to eradicate torture should, first and foremost, be concentrated on prevention and called for the early adoption of an optional protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment aimed at establishing a preventive system of regular visits to places of detention. The Conference also suggested that the Commission on the Status of Women and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women should examine the possibility of introducing the right of petition through the preparation of an optional protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

26. In addition, the Commission on Human Rights, in its resolutions 1994/90 and 1994/91, decided to establish two open-ended working groups, one of which would consider drafting an optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the issue of raising the age limit for children in the armed forces, and the other to elaborate guidelines for a possible draft optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, as well as basic measures for their prevention and eradication. The Committee on the Rights of the Child prepared a draft optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child in respect of raising the age limit of children serving in the armed forces and is preparing a response on the subject of the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

27. The Sub-Commission prepared for comment the text of a possible draft third optional protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (annexed to its resolution 1993/26). The Human Rights Committee subsequently informed the Sub-Commission that, in its view, it was inadvisable to pursue the elaboration of an optional protocol that aimed at adding article 9.3 and 9.4 as well as article 14 to the list of non-derogable rights enumerated in article 4.2 of the Covenant.

Overdue and non-submitted reports (paras. 70-72)

28. The issue of overdue reports and non-submission of reports has continued to receive considerable attention.

29. The independent expert, in his interim report, stated that "the current level of overdue reports (in excess of 1,000) is chronic and entirely unacceptable. As long as it is tolerated, the credibility of the entire regime is threatened, Governments become accustomed to ignoring their obligations, and the criticisms of those who portray the reporting system as

toothless or ineffectual are partly vindicated." He added that "the immunity from scrutiny, currently enjoyed by non-reporting States, must be removed by scheduling the situation in those States for examination." The Vienna Statement noted that "Full and effective compliance with international treaty obligations is an essential component of an international order based on the rule of law. Failure to comply, including a failure to report as required, constitutes a violation of international law."

30. The provision of advisory services to States parties whose reports were overdue was advocated by both the independent expert and by the representatives of the international treaty bodies meeting at Vienna. The World Conference also endorsed that view, stating that the Centre for Human Rights "should make available to States, upon request, assistance on specific human rights issues, including the preparation of reports under human rights treaties". Additionally, the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 1994/19 invited States parties that had not been able to submit their initial reports to avail themselves of technical assistance.

31. The advisory services programme of the Centre for Human Rights has sponsored training seminars on reporting at the regional level and the training of government officials on reporting under the major international human rights treaties has become the focus of the Centre's fellowship programme for 1994.

Global reports (para. 73)

32. Considerable attention has been accorded to this subject since the Fourth Meeting of Chairpersons, especially within the context of: (a) coordinating multiple reporting requirements and guidelines for preparing State party reports, and (b) reducing the burden of reporting including through studying the suggestion of one overall report on treaty obligations. The World Conference specifically recommended to the human rights treaty bodies, to the meetings of chairpersons of the treaty bodies and to the meetings of States parties, that they should continue to take steps aimed at coordinating the multiple reporting requirements and guidelines for preparing State reports under the respective human rights conventions and should study the suggestion that one overall report on treaty obligations undertaken by each State would make these procedures more effective and increase their impact.

33. The issue of how the treaty bodies should address this matter is an important one, especially for the longer term. Options include:

(i) Revision of each treaty body's guidelines;

(ii) Revision of the core document guidelines;

(iii) Revision of both sets of reporting guidelines; or

(iv) Drawing up a set of coordinated reporting guidelines, either for both initial and periodic reports, or only for periodic reports, with the aim of having States submit a single report covering the implementation of their obligations under all of the major international human rights instruments to which they are a party.

(a) Multiple reporting requirements and guidelines

34. The World Conference recommended that the "Treaty monitoring bodies should include the status of women and the human rights of women in their deliberations and findings, making use of gender-specific data", and that "States should be encouraged to supply information on the situation of women de jure and de facto in their reports to treaty monitoring bodies". Similarly, the Commission on Human Rights, in its resolution 1994/19, recommended that the reporting guidelines adopted by the treaty bodies be amended to identify gender-specific information to be addressed by States parties in their reports and invited the persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies at their next meeting to consider means of ensuring information exchange and cooperation among the treaty bodies regarding their practice relating to the human rights of women. The Commission on Human Rights, in its resolution 1994/49, invited the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and other similar bodies also to give full attention to monitoring compliance by States parties with their commitments under the relevant human rights instruments regarding the rights of people infected with HIV/AIDS, their families and people with whom they live, or people presumed to be at risk of infection. In the future the treaty bodies may well be asked to give special consideration to other issues, such as those relating to the family and to human rights education.

(b) Reducing the burden of reporting, including through studying the suggestion of one overall report on treaty obligations

35. The Commission on Human Rights, in its resolution 1994/19, urged the treaty bodies to examine ways of reducing the duplication of reporting required under the different instruments and of generally reducing the reporting burden on Member States, inter alia, by identifying where cross-referencing can be used in report writing and by considering the utility of single comprehensive reports and of replacing periodic reports with specifically tailored reports and thematic reports.

36. With regard to cross-referencing, the independent expert has suggested that where a State had already provided information in a report to one treaty body the relevant information should not need to be submitted and reproduced several times but should be handled simply by reference to the relevant report. He emphasized that such a procedure would in no way challenge or undermine the authority of a treaty body to request whatever additional information it required, nor would the consideration of the information by one treaty body in any way prejudice the approach that another treaty body might adopt towards the same information. Accordingly, the approach would be fully compatible with the preservation of the autonomy of each treaty body.

37. With respect to the issue of the utility of single comprehensive reports and of replacing periodic reports with specifically tailored reports and thematic reports, the independent expert suggested, inter alia, that

> "it would seem possible, at least in principle, for a particular State to adopt this approach unilaterally by preparing a single comprehensive document and submitting it to the treaty bodies ... within a time frame acceptable to each of the Committees ... . If such an approach were to

be specifically endorsed by the various treaty bodies there would be good reason for a major effort to be made to coordinate reporting requirements somewhat and to seek to synchronize reporting schedules for each State. A global report would also resolve definitively the otherwise unavoidably complex issue of overlapping in terms of issues dealt with".

38. Any decision that may be made with regard to the foregoing would clearly require extensive and careful consideration, both as to modalities and to possible consequences.

Language versions of instruments (para. 74)

39. Treaty bodies occasionally have inquired about the availability of a given human rights instrument in local languages, but have not done so on a systematic basis.

Advisory services and technical assistance (paras.75-76)

40. Relevant information is provided in paragraphs 30 and 31 above. In addition, it may be noted that the General Assembly in its resolution 48/119 invited the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, inter alia, to identify specific needs of States parties that might be addressed through the advisory services and technical assistance programme of the Centre for Human Rights, with the possible participation of members of the committees, where appropriate. In its resolution 1994/19, the Commission on Human Rights also invited the treaty bodies to give priority attention to identifying possibilities for technical assistance and advisory services in the regular course of their work of reviewing the periodic reports of States parties and urged all States parties whose reports were examined by treaty bodies to provide adequate follow-up to the observations and final comments of the treaty bodies on their reports.

41. As indicated in paragraph 31 above, the Centre's fellowship programme for 1994 is being devoted entirely to reporting under the human rights instruments and will involve participants from more than 30 countries including, in particular, countries that require special assistance in complying with reporting obligations.

II. OTHER ISSUES AND DEVELOPMENTS

Universal ratification

42. In the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the World Conference on Human Rights called for universal ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by 1995 and of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women by the year 2000. The Conference also recommended

"that a concerted effort be made to encourage and facilitate the ratification of and accession or succession to international human rights treaties and protocols adopted within the framework of the United Nations system with the aim of universal acceptance; and that the Secretary-General, in consultation with treaty bodies, should consider

opening a dialogue with States not having acceded to these human rights treaties, in order to identify obstacles and to seek ways of overcoming them".

43. Additionally, the World Conference recommended that on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1998, when the General Assembly reviews the progress achieved in implementing the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, special attention should be paid to assessing the progress made towards the goal of universal ratification.

44. In his interim report, the independent expert also made several proposals for action, including that States which have formally acceded to some of the six major instruments should be urged in the strongest possible terms to accept the other major instruments, particularly where States were a party to only one of the two International Covenants; that as a part of the universality strategy specific issues should be identified and obstacles targeted; and that expert assistance should be provided for field visits, as appropriate, to identify and help remove such obstacles.

Coordination and information flow between treaty bodies and United Nations organs and agencies

45. The World Conference recommended that coordination within the United Nations system in respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms should be increased and that the various relevant organs and bodies should cooperate with a view to strengthening, rationalizing and streamlining their activities. In the Vienna Statement, which also called for greater coordination, in particular among the various international treaty bodies, specialized agencies and regional organizations, it was pointed out that failure in that regard involved a risk of wasteful duplication and the adoption of divergent interpretations of comparable norms. In the Statement it was reiterated, inter alia, that regular meetings should take place between members of the treaty bodies, as well as their secretariats, to exchange information and discuss matters of common interest and that coordinated access by all the treaty bodies to appropriate human rights-related databases operated by the United Nations and relevant specialized agencies should be promoted.

46. In its resolution 1994/19, the Commission on Human Rights requested the Chairpersons at their fifth meeting to consider, in particular, the need to strengthen coordination between the treaty bodies and the International Labour Organisation, with a view to identifying areas of overlap between the respective instruments and various ILO Conventions.

The International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid

47. In view of the favourable developments that have taken place in the Republic of South Africa recently, the Chairpersons may wish to suggest to the Commission on Human Rights that the monitoring mechanism established under the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid (i.e., the Group of Three) be suspended.

Manual on Human Rights Reporting

48. Owing to the need to include a new chapter relating to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the operations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, as well as to reflect the numerous procedural and other changes that have been adopted by the various committees since its publication, it would appear desirable to revise the Manual prior to its issuance in loose-leaf format, as recommended earlier.